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## Statement submitted by FEMM Foundation, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

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## Statement

The FEMM Foundation is a knowledge-based health program for women inspired by women's right to be informed participants in their own healthcare and to make voluntary decisions based on options, information, and understanding. The Foundation is dedicated to health education, medical research, and improving reproductive health care to advance women's health.

Sustainable cities (Goal 11) require the realization of all aspects of development. It is essential for cities to recognize the importance of health and to centre health services where they can be accessed by all or most and address public health issues through agencies. Resilient and safe cities are those in which the all-round health needs of their populations are met.

Providing in-depth, accurate medical information and treatment for women and girls has proven challenging. This is also an obstacle to the pursuit of sustainable living conditions for women and girls. Poor health can impact personal, social, and economic aspects of people's lives, leaving them isolated even in growing cities.

Women and girls comprise approximately half the population of the world, but remain more vulnerable to health problems due to both biological and social reasons. Women also often accept as normal symptoms such as irregular bleeding, pain, depression, mood swings, and weight gain, not realizing that these are often signs of underlying hormonal abnormalities. Even when women do seek medical care, most health care providers struggle to diagnose and treat them effectively.

These underlying conditions can affect women and girls' long-term overall health. They can also affect women and girls' ability to complete their education, engage in work, and plan their families, interfering with their ability to participate in all areas of their lives. Sustainable cities require health care that addresses previously underserved reproductive health needs for women and girls.

FEMM's researchers have rethought women's health. They have found that a woman's hormonal health is intrinsically linked with her overall health. They have developed better diagnostic criteria to identify conditions that are currently treated mainly at the symptomatic level and treat them at the roots.

FEMM's Medical Management program trains doctors to diagnose and treat reproductive health problems, with a holistic view of a woman's body that incorporates recent research on the complex hormonal interactions between different body systems. FEMM has developed innovative protocols that allow doctors to identify underlying problems with precision and treat them effectively. This medical support provides treatments that help women to live healthy lives.

Promoting a robust women's health system requires investment and empowerment of women to take charge of their reproductive and thus overall health. Inclusive, safe, resilient and truly sustainable cities are better rooted when they pay attention to the often overlooked needs of women, and consider that their families and societies depend on healthy, empowered women to thrive.

When people attain the highest level of health they can, they are able to thrive and partake in their communities, lowering poverty and helping make their cities sustainable. FEMM is ready to help address the often under-addressed health needs of women.